(b) The National Programme for Control of Blindness is being implemented as a 100 per cent Centrally Sponsored Plan Scheme. The Programme envisages provision of eye care services through mobile units, establishment of up-graded Ophthalmology Departments in Medical Colleges, Development of District Hospitals in respect of Ophthalmic wing, well equipped Primary Health Centres, Regional Ophthalmic Institutee and Ophthalmic Assistants Training schools for training of Ophthalmic assistants to be posted at Primary Health Centres and District Hospitals.

A scheme to prevent blindness caused by Vitamin 'A' deficiency among children through oral administration of massive dose of vitamin 'A' is also in operation. This scheme is being implemented in all States/U.Ts.

(c) A provision of Rs. 7.50 crores has been made for the year 1984-85.

(d) As per sample surveys carried out by Indian Council of Medical Research in 1973-75 in different parts of the country, the number of blind is estimated at 9 million which is approximately 1.4 per cent of the population. The Programme aims at reducing the incidence of blindness to 0.3 per cent by 2000 A.D.

Project for development of Marathwada Region

1625. DR. BAPU KALDATE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether he has received a letter from the Chief Minister of Maharashtra suggesting to include the Manmad-Mudkhed (Broad-Gauge conversion), Propect-Manmad-Aurangabad-Parbhani-Parli-Vaijnath in the 25-Point Programme for development of the Marathwada Region;

(b) whether the Chief Minister has also asked for an increase in the provision to Rs. 10 crores;

(c) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(d) what further action Government have taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHOUDHARY): (a) to (c) Letter has been received from Chief Minister of Maharashtra mentioning that the project of conversion of M.G. line from Manmad to Parli-Vaijnath into B. G. has been included in the 25 point programme of development of the Marathwada region, and has asked the Railways to provide Rs. 10 crores for this work during 1984-85.

(d) Due to constraint of resources, it has been possible to allot Rs. 4.01 crores only for this work during 1984-85.

Registration of Pharmacists in Delhi

1626. SHRI K. CHATHUNNI MASTER: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state the number of 'qualified persons' who have been registered as pharmacists in Delhi by the Pharmacy Council during the last three years?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (MISS KUMUDBEN M. JOSHI): 773 persons.

Enforcement of Section 42 of the Pharmacy Act

1627. SHRI K. CHATHUNNI MASTER: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state whether Government propose to enforce Section 42 of the Pharmacy Act 1948 during the current year?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (MISS KUMUDBEN M. JOSHI): According to the second proviso to Section 42 of the Pharmacy Act, 1948, that Section 42 shall take effect from 1-9-1984.

Increasing the quota edible oils, rice and polyester cloth to Gujarat

1628. SHRI VITHALBHAI MOTIRAM PATEL: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Gujarat Government has urged the Central Government to increase the quota of edible oils, rice, polyester and controlled-cloth; and